

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0014

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 12727

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIP, KE, US

SUBJECT: US DELEGATION TO KENYATTA FUNERAL

1. I WOULD LIKE TO REITERATE THAT THE SPECIAL NATURE OF US/KENYAN RELATIONS, BUILT ON COMMON IDEALS AND SIMILAR POLITICAL WORLD-VIEWS, TOGETHER WITH GREAT STATURE OF KENYATTA THROUGHOUT AFRICA AS WELL AS NATIONALLY, COMBINE TO MAKE COMPELLING ARGUMENT FOR TOP-LEVEL US REPRESENTATION AT KENYATTA FUNERAL. I AM FIRMLY CONVINCED THAT OCCASION OF FUNERAL PRESENTS US WITH EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY NOT ONLY TO REINFORCE THE ALREADY EXCELLENT POSITION THE US ENJOYS IN KENYA, BUT ALSO TO EXERT A SALUTARY INFLUENCE ON THE CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION IN KENYA BY STRENGTHENING, THROUGH OUR ASSOCIATION AT THE SENIOR LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT WITH KENYA, THOSE TENDENCIES WHICH WE HOPE WILL SERVE TO MAINTAIN IN KENYA THE IDEAL AND PRACTICE OF LIBERAL DEMOCRACY.

2. I INITIALLY RECOMMENDED THAT THE UNITED STATES BE REPRESENTED EITHER BY THE VICE PRESIDENT OR BY THE SECRETARY. WE WERE LATER TOLD THAT A CHANGE EXISTED THAT THE CHIEF JUSTICE MIGHT LEAD OUR DELEGATION. ANYONE OF THESE THREE FIGURES WOULD DEMONSTRATE, TO THE DEGREE I BELIEVE APPROPRIATE, THE CLOSE UNITED STATES ASSOCIATION WITH, AND SUPPORT OF, DEMOCRATIC KENYA.

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3. I DON'T WANT TO BE SUSPECTED OF ATTEMPTING OVERKILL ON THIS ISSUE. I FEEL STRONGLY THAT IT IS IN THE BEST UNITED STATES AND KENYAN INTERESTS THAT OUR REPRESENTATION BE AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL. ON THE OTHER HAND, I DO NOT PREDICT CATASTROPHE IF IT ISN'T. I WOULD SIMPLY REGRET THAT WE MISSED THE CHANCE TO ADD A GREATER DIMENSION TO THE US/KENYAN RELATIONSHIP, WHICH HAS PRODUCED SUCH SOLID BENEFITS

FOR BOTH PARTIES.

4. WHATEVER OUR DECISION, I HOPE THAT IT CAN BE MADE SOON. WE ARE RECEIVING A CONSTANT STREAM OF INFORMATION ON OTHER DELEGATIONS, WHICH MAKES IT APPEAR AS THOUGH PERHAPS AS MANY AS 100 NATIONS WILL BE REPRESENTED AT THE CEREMONIES. MOST WILL BE OF VERY SENIOR LEVEL, INCLUDING A NUMBER OF HEADS OF STATE, FOREIGN MINISTERS AND OTHERS OF CABINET RANK. SUCH A LARGE INFLUX WILL MAKE IT VERY DIFFICULT TO GET HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS AT THE LAST MOMENT. WE NOW HAVE TWO SUITES AND 25 ROOMS BOOKED, BUT WE MUST CONFIRM THAT BOOKING BY COM TOMORROW AND BE RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYING FOR THE ROOMS IF THEY ARE NOT OCCUPIED, OR WE WILL LOSE THEM. WE WERE INFORMED UNOFFICIALLY THIS AFTERNOON THAT THE KENYAN GOVERNMENT WILL ACT WITHIN THE NEXT DAY OR TWO TO BLOCK ALL ROOMS WHICH ARE NOT BOOCED FOR OFFICIAL DELEGATIONS. SO FOR PRACTICAL AS WELL AS FOR PROTOCOLARY REASONS, WE NEED TO KNOW THE NUMBER OF OUR DELEGATION AS WELL AS ALL SUPPORT PERSONNEL JUST AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.
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